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Correspondence.

ON PURGATORY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—1. I again assert that prayers and sacrifices are offered for the dead by the Catholic Church for another purpose, besides that of getting the soul out of Purgatory; but I deny that this admission contradicts, even by implication, the doctrine of Purgatory. 2. I, moreover, respectfully submit, that the word *commemorate*, as used in any passage by St. Cyril, with respect to prayers for the dead, instead of destroying, establishes, beyond dispute, the distinction between prayers for the saints, and those for the other dead. St. Cyril's words, which I shall transcribe where necessary, will test the accuracy of this assertion. He says—*Δοῦμεθα σου πάντες ἡμεῖς, καὶ ταύτην προσφέρομεν σοὶ τὴν θύσιαν, ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν καὶ τῶν προκεκοιμημένων, πρῶτον Πατριάρχων, Προφῆτων, Ἀποστόλων, Μαρτύρων, ὅπως ὁ Θεὸς εὐχαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ πρεσβείαις προσδεῖται ἡμῶν τὴν δεήσειν.* "We all beseech Thee, and we offer this sacrifice to Thee, that, in the first place, we may commemorate the patriarchs, the prophets, Apostles, and martyrs, who are dead, that God, through their prayers and intercessions, may receive our supplications." St. Cyril continues—*εἴτα καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν προκεκοιμημένων ἁγίων Πατέρων καὶ Ἐπισκόπων, καὶ πάντων ἀπλῶς τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν προκεκοιμημένων, μέγιστον ὄνησιν πιστεύοντες ἐσθθαί ταις ψυχαῖς ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡ δεήσει ἀναφέρεται, τῆς ἁγίας καὶ φοβεροτάτης προκειμένης θύσιος.* "Next we beseech Thee, and we offer this sacrifice to Thee, for our deceased holy Fathers and bishops, and, in fine, for all our departed, believing that the souls receive great advantage, for whom supplication is offered up in the celebration of the holy and tremendous sacrifice." The idea of commemoration, suggested by the first passage, is perfectly limited and independent of that in the second passage. In the former, the word *μνημονεύωμεν*, is applied exclusively to the patriarchs, &c., for the purpose of invoking God through their prayers and intercession; in fact, the natural structure of the discourse prohibits the application of it to the dead alluded to in the second passage; for these the commemoration is, *Δοῦμεθα σου πάντες ἡμεῖς καὶ ταύτην προσφέρομεν σοὶ τὴν θύσιαν ὑπὲρ τῶν προκεκοιμημένων, &c., &c.*, to the end of the second passage given above; and thus far, the distinction is self-evident and incontrovertible.

3. The holy Father next tells his *neophytes* he will explain for them, by an example, the advantage which arises to those for whom supplication is offered, *ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡ δεήσει ἀναφέρεται*; "for many say, what benefit is it to a soul departed this life, either with sins or without them, to be commemorated in this sacrifice? But tell me, I say, if a king had driven into banishment some persons who had offended him, and their friends supplicating, should present a crown of great value, might not the king, by that means, grant a pardon to the guilty persons?" He continues to explain for them, that, "after the same manner that they supplicate the king to seek pardon for their friends, so do we offer our supplications to God for those that are dead, if they be sinners; we do not propose a crown, but we offer Christ slain, for our sins, propitiating, both for them (the dead) and for us, Him who is so beneficent." *κατὰ αὐτὸν τροπὸν καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑπὲρ τῶν κεκοιμημένων αὐτῷ τὰς ἐχέσεις προσφέροντες, καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ αὐτῶν, οὐ στεφανὸν πλεομεν, ἀλλὰ Χριστὸν ἐσφαγιασμένον ὑπὲρ τῶν μετῴρων ἁμαρτημάτων προσφέρομεν, ἐξελκυσμένοι ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν τὸν φιλάνθρωπον.*—*Catech. Mystag. v.*, page 38. This last passage affords very important and decisive evidence of the practice of prayers and sacrifice, at that time offered by the Church, for the relief of the dead, to obtain pardons for them, &c.

"If they (the dead) be sinners," or "though they be sinners," applied antithetically with respect to the patriarchs, &c., &c., "we offer supplications for them"—*τὰς δεήσεις προσφέροντες*; "we offer Christ slain"—*Χριστὸν ἐσφαγιασμένον* (thus, he names the sacrifice of the altar), to propitiate God for them, to make atonement, to obtain pardon, alike for the dead and the living, as members of the same body; thus confirming the distinction already noticed, and vindicating the practice of praying for the relief of the dead from the objections of those who questioned its efficacy, and who, contrary to what you assert, are ranked among heretics. For *Aerius*, on this account, is set down for a heretic by *St. Augustine, Lib. de Hæc. l. iii.*, &c., where he says of him—"he taught private opinions of his own, saying, 'that we must not pray or offer sacrifice for the dead;' and, in the same manner, he is numbered in the list of heretics by *St. Epiphanius, Hæc. lxxv.*, &c.

4. Thus, in the fourth century, we find the Church virtually inculcating, "that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls there detained are relieved by the prayers of the faithful, but, chiefly, by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar."—*Conc. Trid., Sess. xxv., de Purgatorio*. I showed in my last letter, that this doctrine is supported by the authority of all the ancient liturgies; and 5. I quoted a passage from the Liturgy of St. James, as *old a form of offering for the dead* as any to be found in the world, in which it is positively stated, that the sacrifice was offered to supplicate repose, relief, rest,

from pain, torment, &c., "for the souls of the departed." I proved that this was the doctrine of the Church in the 2nd and 3rd centuries; and, hence, we find the essential doctrine of Purgatory supported by a respectable antiquity, and claiming the title of immemorial prescription; and, at a much later period, we find a strict corroboration of this doctrine in the first Liturgy of the Church of England, declared by an act of parliament to have been framed by inspiration of the Holy Ghost: here we have a prayer for the departed, that "God would grant them mercy and everlasting peace."—*Collier's Ecc. Hist.*, vol. ii., page 257. 6. Your cavils with respect to the opinion of St. Augustine are an odd sort of argument; let him defend himself. He says—"when we offer the sacrifice of the altar, or give alms for all the faithful departed, they are acts of thanksgiving for the truly good—they are propitiations for those not very bad—and though they are no helps to those that are very bad, they are some consolation to the living." Cum ergo sacrificia, sive altaris, sive quarumcunque elemosynarum pro baptizatis defunctis omnibus offeruntur; pro valde bonis gratiarum actiones sunt; pro non valde malis, propitiations sunt; pro valde malis, etsi nulla sunt adjumenta mortuorum, qualescunque vivarum consolationes sunt.—*Enchirid.*, cap. cx., page 238. Now, I challenge you, if you can, to repeat your question—"might we not as well pray for the devil?" I stated nothing but what is consonant to the opinion expressed in the above passage, and I maintain, it is an ample justification of the practices of Rome that they are not worse than this.

7. You say—"we find no fault with those who think it likely" that the saints in heaven pray for us; but you add—"it is a very different matter when we are told that we must pray to them," &c.; "and this is exactly what St. Cyril does not say in this passage;" and allow me to remark, for your information, that this, too, is exactly what the Catholic Church does not say or teach. Christianity obliges us no more to desire the prayers of the saints, than it obliged St. Paul to desire the prayers of the Christians.—*Rom. xv. 30, 31; Eph. vi. 19; Heb. xiii. 18.*, &c.

And I now call upon you to show, upon the authority of any orthodox standard of Catholic doctrines, or of any approved exposition of Catholic principles, a positive law of the Catholic Church, by which it is expressly stated "that we must pray to them." This, as a journalist, you owe to the public, whom you may have misled, by asserting that we (Catholics) must pray to the saints; you owe it to me as an individual engaged in the defence of Catholic truth. And, if you cannot refer to any authentic source, as I am confident you cannot, you cannot refuse us to decline the honour of subscribing to a creed, such as you think proper to frame for us. Let our real principles be fairly admitted, not these fictitious forms of *credenda*, these caricatures of Catholic belief, and I feel confident you will be quite unable to refute them.

8. The Council of Trent will afford you no assistance, except in the emboweled and decapitated form that you cited it in CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. iii., p. 71, col. 1. You complain of the terms in which I treat your citation; you say—"you had no intention to misrepresent Roman Catholic doctrines," &c.; and "we cited, of course, merely as much as was necessary to elucidate our purpose." Now, I ask you, was not the subject discussed by you, "The Invocation of Saints?" and the garbled quotation was necessary to elucidate your purpose! Hence, it plainly follows, that though there was "no intention to misrepresent Roman Catholic doctrines or the Council of Trent," the very elucidation has degenerated into a flagrant misrepresentation. I do not consider I have used a word disrespectfully. The cause of truth requires plain, open dealing—no suppression of facts, no distortion of evidence. We are assured that the Church in the third and fourth centuries, believed that the saints in heaven prayed for their brethren on earth. 9. On the evidence of St. Cyril we learn, that the Church offered to God, through the saints, their supplications, both for the living and the dead; they held them to be mediators of prayers and intercessions; the liturgies and the Fathers afford joint evidence in this case.

10. This holy patriarch also says—"we offer Christ sacrificed to make atonement to God, to propitiate him, to beg mercy," &c., as expressed by the word *ἐξελκυσμένοι*, for the dead, if they be sinners;" *καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ αὐτῶν*, or, "even if they be sinners;" this sacrifice he, a little before, called *ἡ θύσια ἐκείνη τοῦ λαοῦ*—the very victim of atonement. You cite the words—"when we taste, we are bidden to taste not bread and wine, but the sign of the body and blood of Christ;" and you say—"this is a way of speaking, that no Roman Catholic ever uses," &c.; but in this, I venture to tell you, you are mistaken. The Catholic believes that the outward sacramental appearances of bread and wine, which still remain after consecration, are not only a sign and a memorial of Christ, but also of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We are bidden to taste not bread and wine, but the antitypes, &c.; hence, it plainly follows, that the antitypes, or sacramental elements, were not believed to be bread and wine; but that "in the type of bread the body is given to thee, and in the type of wine the blood is given"—*ἐν τυφῷ ἄρτῳ δίδεται σοὶ τὸ σῶμα, καὶ ἐν τυφῷ οἴνῳ, δίδεται σοὶ τὸ αἷμα*; and, that what appears to be bread, is not bread, though it be taken by the taste to be bread, but it is the body of

Christ; and that which appears to be wine, is not wine, though the taste judges so, but it is the blood of Christ"—*ὁ φαίνόμενος ἄρτος, οὐκ ἄρτος ἐστίν, εἰ καὶ τῇ γεύσει αἰσθητός, ἀλλὰ σῶμα Χριστοῦ, καὶ ὁ φαίνόμενος οἶνος, οὐκ οἶνος ἐστίν, εἰ καὶ τῇ γεύσει τοῦτο βούλεται, ἀλλὰ αἷμα Χριστοῦ.*—*St. Cyril. Catech., Mystagog. iv.*, cap. 320-2.

From these passages of St. Cyril it follows, that though he uses the word *antitype*, to express the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, neither he nor the Church in his time, understood it in your figurative sense. They believed and taught, that though to the senses bread and wine appeared in the sacrament, they were not bread and wine, but the body and blood of Christ; this they teach without any, the slightest ambiguity.

Their sacrifice was identically the same as the sacrifice offered by the Catholic Church of this present day; and we have seen that it was offered then, as well as now, to free souls from the punishments of sin, to render God merciful to them, to make atonement for them, to appease Him, and expiate their offences. And unless you can show that the Church offered sacrifice for this purpose, for the saints who were already in the possession of the beatific vision, or that the plain, but nervous words of St. Cyril cannot now be allowed to represent the same significant ideas, which in the natural and philosophical mechanism of the language they were first used to express, I must still hold that prayers and sacrifice for the relief of the dead, the invocation of saints, setting aside misrepresentation, the real presence in the Eucharist, are three Popish principles coeval with Christianity.

I remain, Sir, yours much obliged,

EDMOND POWER.

To save repetition, we have prefixed numbers to those passages of Mr. Power's letter which require an answer.

No. 1. Mr. Power continues to assert (what we ourselves have always asserted), that prayers for the dead may be offered for another purpose besides that of getting the soul out of Purgatory. So far we are agreed, to the confusion of all those Roman Catholic controversialists who, whenever they find any prayer for the dead, immediately ask us to believe that it must be for the purpose of getting the soul out of Purgatory. Again we say, that prayer for the dead does not prove Purgatory, unless it can be shown that the prayer was offered for the purpose of getting a soul out of Purgatory.

But did the early Church ever pray for the dead, for the purpose of getting a soul out of Purgatory? Mr. Power, will you produce us a prayer expressly for that purpose? You have all the ancient liturgies to search through; produce from them only one prayer, that a soul may be delivered from out of Purgatory—and we will submit. Why will you not produce the prayer, and end this discussion? Can there be any better reason for not producing it—than that no such prayer is to be found?

No. 2. The whole of this paragraph is intended to prove that the word "commemorate" is applied only to "patriarchs, prophets, Apostles, and martyrs," while, for all others who are prayed for, the word "supplicate" only is used.

Now, if Mr. Power had taken the trouble to turn to any one of the ancient liturgies, he would have seen that this distinction, on which he relies so much, has no shadow of foundation; for in all those liturgies the word "commemorate" is expressly applied to all others who are prayed for, as well as to patriarchs, prophets, &c. Let him only look at the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, in *Goar's "Rituale Græcorum,"* and he will find this—*Εὐταυθα ζώντων καὶ τεθνεώτων ὧν ἐθέλει ὁ ἱερεὺς μνημονεῖν ὀνοματῇ*—here the Priest commemorates by name the living and the dead whom he wishes." It is quite useless to bring evidence to prove that this was not in the ancient liturgies, when we see it in the liturgies themselves; and, indeed, it is only by an evident misconstruction of the words of St. Cyril, that Mr. Power makes St. Cyril appear to contradict this. In the Oxford translation, made from the Benedictine and Oxford texts, Mr. Power will see that the first words which he has quoted, "we all beseech thee, and we offer this sacrifice to thee," belong to a previous sentence, relating to prayers for the living. Then he commences about prayers for the dead, at the words, "these we commemorate," &c.; and that word, "commemorate," must run through that whole sentence. So St. Cyril does not contradict the liturgy at all. And, in this sentence, respecting prayer for the dead, there is not one word said of "sacrifice for the dead;" but only that prayer was offered for the dead, at the time that that sacrifice was offered. And this disposes of a great deal of Mr. Power's letter.

No. 3. It is quite clear from the liturgies themselves, that commemorations and prayers were intended to be made only for those "who had gone to rest in hope of the resurrection of eternal life" (qui in spe resurrectionis æternæ vitæ obdormierunt); for these words follow on to the words which allow the commemoration to be made. How, then, are we to account for the fact of St. Cyril being driven to justify prayers for those who died in their sins—*ἀμαρτωλοὶ*? There is only one possible

account of it; this corrupt practice had grown up of praying for such; and St. Cyril had the weakness to try and defend it by a very poor argument of his own, instead of openly saying that the Church and the liturgy gave no sanction to such a practice. So it is now. If we charge the Church of Rome with teaching that the Mass will save those who die in mortal sin, we should be met with assertions that the Council of Trent does not sanction such a practice. But if a priest is offered money to say Masses for one who notoriously died in mortal sin, he is well enough satisfied that it should be thought that the Mass is of use.

But St. Cyril admits that "many" thought these prayers were useless; and he does not say they were heretics, or contradicted the Church by so saying. He only offered a very poor argument of his own, and one, too, which many Roman Catholics say is contrary to the present doctrine of the Church of Rome herself.

No. 4. Is it not wonderful that these old Fathers never speak of Purgatory in those places in which Roman Catholics think that they must mean it? Oh, they speak of it *virtually*! That means that they never name it once! Strange that they should write so much of it, as Roman Catholics think they do, and yet never once mention it. We affirm that St. Cyril, who never names it, does not speak even "virtually" of it, unless Purgatory be for *ἀμάρτωλοι*, which means hardened sinners.

No. 5. In the passage of Mr. Power's letter which we have numbered 5, he says—"I quoted a passage from the Liturgy of St. James, in which it is positively stated, that the sacrifice was offered to supplicate repose, relief, rest, from pain, torment, &c., for the souls of the departed." We can only meet this assertion by an explicit contradiction. Mr. Power marks the words, "pain, torment," in italics, as containing the force of the passage which he quoted. Now, the passage which he quoted from the "Liturgy of St. James," do not contain the words, "pain, torment," at all. The words which he quoted were these, *εἰς ἀναπαυσιν τῶν προκεκοιμημένων ψυχῶν*—that is, "for the rest of the souls of those who have died before us." There is not one word in the quotation about pain or torment. It is true, Mr. Power affirms in the place referred to, "that *ἀναπαυσιν* means rest, relief, &c., from pain, torment, &c., is beyond contradiction.—Apoc. xiv. 11." But the words, "pain, torment," are Mr. Power's own words, and he has no right in his present letter to give those words of his own, as positively stated in the Liturgy of St. James. The argument by which Mr. Power, in that former letter (Nov., 1854), tries to prove that the word *ἀναπαυσιν* (which simply means "rest") does mean "rest from pain and torment"—such as purgatory—does really prove exactly the reverse. In his present letter he refers to Apoc. xiv. 11, and they have no rest day or night—"καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἀναπαυσιν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός." Any one who looks to the verse will see that this is said of those who are in hell, not in purgatory; for, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." And the only contrast to this which is spoken of, is in the 13th verse—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; (*ὡς ἀναπαύσονται ἐκ τῶν κοπῶν αὐτῶν*); so the only rest spoken of is from "labours," and not from "pain or torment"; and those who have "no rest," are in hell, and those who have "rest," are in heaven, from the time of their death; and there is not one word in the passage about rest to prove the pain or torment of purgatory.

We ask Mr. Power to look at the prayer in the "Apostolical Constitutions" (Book viii., c. 41), which, although not really "apostolical," is, at least, as old, and probably older than the prayers in the Liturgy of St. James. That prayer is for those only "who have rested in Christ;" and the prayer is, "that God would place them in the bosom of Abraham—where pain, and sorrow, and mourning have fled away"—using, in the latter part of the sentence, the very words of the Greek version of Isaiah xxxv. 10. If any one can find Purgatory in that verse, he may find it in this prayer. And the 43rd chapter says—"But we say these things of the pious, for though you should bestow all your worldly goods for them, you cannot assist the wicked at all; for he who was an enemy to God while alive, without doubt he is so when dead."—Labbe and Coss., vol. i. 504, 505. This seems to us much sounder, as it probably is much older, doctrine, than St. Cyril's on the same point.

No. 6. We think our answer to the use which Mr. Power made of St. Augustine was a fair one. Mr. Power brought him forward as justifying prayers for the damned—for those whose salvation is past hope. We said then, and we say now again, why not for the devil, too, if for the damned? Will Mr. Power now say that it is lawful to pray for the damned? He will not. Why, then, did he bring forward St. Augustine to prove it? We say again it is a poor defence for the Church of Rome to say her practices are "not worse" than this.

No. 7. Mr. Power calls upon us to show "a positive law of the Catholic Church by which it is expressly stated" that we must pray to saints. We never said there was such a law. He himself quotes our words thus—"we are told that we must pray to them." Many Roman

Catholics accuse Protestants of irreligion and impiety, for not praying to them. That is enough to justify our words. The Church of Rome inserts such prayers in her authorized services; that looks very like saying we must use them; especially as the late "infallible" decree of the Pope says, that the prayers of the Church are a rule of faith. But we admit there is no law of the Church of Rome to oblige us to pray to them. We thank Mr. Power for the hint. Roman Catholics, attend! There is nothing in God's Word to justify you in praying to saints, and your Church does not require you to pray to them! Mark that!

But when Mr. Power goes on to imply that prayers to saints stand in the same position as St. Paul's request for the prayers of Christians, we must dissent from him. We have the examples of an inspired Apostle to warrant us in asking the prayers of our fellow-Christians. We have not the example of any Apostle for praying to saints. Therefore, says Mr. Power, we are no more bound to pray to saints, than to ask the prayers of our fellow-Christians; and, we think, "not quite so much."

No. 8. With respect to the quotation from the Council of Trent, we have already stated that we quoted, for brevity's sake, only what seemed to us to bear upon the precise point we were speaking of. But, as all persons do not see the precise point of a quotation in the same light, we frankly confess it is better to quote more fully, and we shall be careful to do so in future.

No. 9. Mr. Power says—"On the evidence of St. Cyril we learn, that the Church offered to God, through the saints, their supplications." If this mean that they asked the saints to present their supplications to God, we expressly deny that St. Cyril said any such thing. He supposes that the saints do pray for us; and, therefore, he says we commemorate them, hoping that God will hear their prayers for us. Not one word of our praying to them.

No. 10. Mr. Power ventures to tell us we are mistaken in saying, that no Roman Catholic now speaks of the consecrated bread and wine as St. Cyril did, as "signs of the body and blood of Christ;" but will he venture to prove that we are mistaken? If so, let him produce some quotations from Roman Catholics, in which they call the consecrated bread and wine "signs." And let him explain to us, how a thing can be the sign of itself.

We trust we have said enough to show that there is much in Mr. Power's letter which, as a lover of truth, he ought to reconsider.

ON INFALLIBILITY IN THE CHURCH OF ROME.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—I beg you to accept my thanks for having inserted in your paper my inquiry about Purgatory, and for the reply you have given to it. A candid disbeliever of the doctrine could not say less, and I am sure you will not blame me for still hoping, for sake of those who believe in it, that an answer may yet be given by some of their own teachers.

I wish I could think that the difficulty of adhering to the doctrines of the Church of Rome were lessened, instead of being aggravated, as they are, by the introduction of so startling a lesson as she now calls on her children to learn and to believe.

To question the divine authority of any doctrine the Church proposes, is the last thought of those who are born and educated in her bosom; but there is a class amongst her disciples who look for a little more deference to the Word of God, than her new article of faith discloses. To this class the writings of the Fathers are unattainable, even as books of reference, but they are not, consequently, destitute of reason and understanding, and cannot adopt many items of faith which they find prevailing amongst those who are left exclusively to the teachers of the Church, such, for instance, as was lately declared by a most pious and faithful Catholic woman to be her real and solemn belief—namely, that the Blessed Virgin "never was born," that she was spued out of the mouth of God.

I cannot believe that any Catholic priest ever taught this to any one, but I must confess, that what the Church now teaches, and requires to be believed, is open to as much objection as this portion of the poor woman's creed, and that it gives rise to very serious doubts as to whether she has not outstepped her authority, and forfeited her claim to infallibility.

In asserting her infallibility, she certainly violates a principle on which she acts in other matters. In the Douay Catechism, from which I was instructed in my childhood and youth, it is asserted, that no amount of venial sins can make or constitute a mortal sin. May we not fairly ask how many fallibilities can make an infallibility, and whether any number of fallible men can compose an infallible council, and decree an infallible doctrine?

I know that the Church adopts exclusively as hers the promise of our Blessed Saviour, that the Holy Ghost should abide with His Church for ever, and teach her all truth to the end of the world; and this maxim of the Church has induced me to examine my Bible (a Douay Bible, first

published by the English College, at Rheims, anno 1582, corrected according to the Clementine edition of the Scriptures), to see if I could find any indication of what our Saviour considered to be the infallible truth, to the teaching of which he annexed this gracious promise, and I find the verse to stand thus—(John xiv., 26, Douay version) "But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom my Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and will bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I shall have said to you;" in the fifteenth chapter, still speaking of the Holy Spirit, he says, "He shall give testimony of me;" and in the sixteenth chapter are these words, "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Here is not one word about bearing any testimony to, or teaching anything of, the Blessed Virgin.

Will you, sir, deem me unreasonable and undeserving of an answer, when I ask from any Catholic, whether priest or layman, that may have studied the Scriptures, whether the words of our Saviour, "whatsoever I shall have said unto you," include the "all things" that the Holy Ghost should "teach, and put us in remembrance of;" because, if so, no Catholic need consider himself bound to believe the newly-proclaimed doctrine as essential to salvation. Such a doctrine of the Blessed Virgin is not spoken of, or alluded to by either our Saviour himself, or by those to whom the Holy Ghost was afterwards given at Pentecost (Acts ii. 4, Douay version); and who after that spoke as He, the "Holy Ghost, gave them to speak;" and I cannot help thinking that infallibility is only promised to those who speak only whatsoever things Jesus has spoken, and whatsoever things the "Holy Ghost gave to the Apostles to speak;" and that the Church of Rome cannot be infallible, unless when she teaches what Christ and his inspired Apostles taught; and that any church may be, and is, fallible in teaching "doctrines and commandments of men."—Matt. xv. 9.

Oh, sir, no one reared in Protestantism can estimate the misery a Catholic feels when he first begins to doubt the evidence on which he has believed all that he thinks sacred and true, and it is very cruel not to answer this inquiry explicitly and fully.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

IN EARNEST.

FARMING OPERATIONS FOR MARCH.

[From the Irish Farmers' Gazette.]

SPRING WHEAT.

FROM the late very severe frost and snow-storm which continued during last month, the sowing of spring wheat was totally out of question. The snow having now disappeared, every exertion should be made in getting in this valuable crop, as soon as the land has been sufficiently dried to bear the plough and horses; but, in many instances, the spade and shovel must be substituted for the plough and horses, or the grain cannot be sown in proper time; when men can be had, their employment will amply repay the farmer for the extra cost, as the land must remain, in numberless instances, too wet and poachy to be able to get in the crop in time by horses.

Winter Wheats.—As soon as the land is sufficiently dry to bear it, it should be well harrowed, to break the hardened crust, destroy the annual weeds, which have so luxuriated under the comfortable cover of the snow as to render the whole surface perfectly green to the eye in many instances, to mould the young wheat plants, and promote their sending out additional coronal roots; after which the application of the roller will be of great service. The young wheat in drills should also be hand or horse hoed; but these works should only be performed when the land is sufficiently dry, otherwise more harm than good will be done, and it had better be put off till next month.

Potatoes planted before the storm should now be closely examined, and where found injured, the loss repaired by dibbling in fresh sets. Accounts which have come to hand report much damage amongst the early planted potatoes; but we would advise a very close examination to be instituted, as though the flesh of the set may present a blackened appearance, many of the eyes will be found still good, and a crop may be expected; but constant (at least weekly) examinations should be made, so as to ascertain the amount of damage in time to dibble in fresh sets where needed.

Potatoes should now be planted with as little delay as the state of the land will permit. In damp, low soils, beds or ridges are to be preferred; in dry soils, drills will be the most expeditious and economical mode; a liberal dressing of manure will be requisite to insure an early and abundant crop.

Spring Vetches mixed with a little oats should now be sown in breadth to suit requirements in July; successional sowings to be made once a fortnight or three weeks, till June or July next.

Barley may be sown from the middle to the end of the month; as this grain germinates very rapidly, the soil should be finely pulverized for its reception. When sown after green crops, to be laid down with clover and grass seeds, the best mode will be to drill or rib in the barley at 18 inches apart, which affords plenty of light and air for the perfect growth of the small seeds.